1;Stanford U, S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China
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536 relaxation, special events added interest and variety to the routine of village life. Itinerant dramatic troupes occasionally performed, and until very recently the storyteller frequently appeared on the village streets to spin his 622 tales to an impromptu audience. The election of a village headman often involved political maneuvering and a town meeting. Pilgrimages 796 to famous mountains or shrines were often undertaken in the slack agricultural season for religious reasons or purely for relaxation. 521 Perhaps the most universal reaction was, as in all illiterate communities, gossip and desultory conversation. Francis Hsü describes the recreation pattern in a small Yunnan town:

> In the evening, many shop doors may be found open to welcome neighbors and friends who care to come into the brightly lighted interior for a chat, and little clusters of men stand or squat near some street corner, often near a food stand.... The topics discussed at these gatherings range from rumors about national affairs and market prices to local rights and wrongs.[11]

11, Hsü, op. cit., p. 25.

3: Hutson M-5 (no date) 1921 AF16 Southwest China AF16

Discussions are held 講評書 *chiang p'ing shu*, generally in a tea shop or open courtyard, when some ancient character's merits and demerits are discussed, with a good deal of sarcasm and dramatic contortion; the speech is often lewd and the characters of many of the speakers are of the lowest; in fact many are libertines, with some wit and humour to cloak their wickedness.

A news vendor who carries a stool and books round with him is called 上馬冊冊 *shang ma ts'ê ts'ê*; he stands on the stool and sells his literature, which has a bearing on current events; his sign is a pair of chopsticks.

A news vendor of the yellow press is called 下馬 *hsia ma ts'ê ts'ê*. He travels round and carries a flag of yellow or sometimes white paper on which are written the latest sensations. He visits the towns and markets, and to this kind of individual many false rumours are to be traced. He stands on the ground as compared with the former who stands on a stool.

On the birthday of the goddess of Mercy Kuan-yin or other festival there are often mixed gatherings in the temples to hear the Buddhist doctrines preached. The crowds are often of the lowest type.

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PURCHASE OF PROPERTY 田地買賣 *t'ien ti mai mai.*

THE middleman to find a purchaser first writes a *t'o yo* 託約 as an evidence of willingness to sell the property. In this deed the size of the house or the extent of the land offered for sale, and also the price wanted, must be stated. If the owner is at all an unreliable person he will probably be made to write a *yün yo* 允約 or a deed of willingness to sell, which he will have to sign in the presence of witnesses, lest he should turn round and blame the middlemen and get them into trouble.

The price should be fixed in the presence of the seller, purchaser and middlemen, 三面定價 *san mien ting chia*, but it is more commonly settled in the tea shop by the middlemen alone. After the price has been agreed upon,